TAXFORT

Your Home Base for Taxes



FORT KNOWLEDGE

NOVEMBER 2026

A Small Business Owner's **Expense Review**

Five expense categories, 22 yes-or-no questions, and strategies to lower or renegotiate each category—before the pricing changes in 2027.

5 categories | **22 questions** | **1 scoreboard**

Hey,

IT'S THE TAXFORT TEAM

Let's not beat around the bush.



Living in 2026 is costly, especially for small businesses facing rising software subscriptions, insurance bills, and unexpected fees.

Instead of raising prices, this guide focuses on reducing costs.

It highlights five common areas where expenses can be trimmed and offers tips for renegotiation, along with a scoreboard to track savings.

Why November?
Many renewals, rate increases, and annual plans reset in January. By reviewing your options now, you can cancel, downgrade, or renegotiate before committing to 2027 pricing.

WHAT'S INSIDE

01 Software & subscriptions
02 Insurance
03 Banking + payments
04 Marketing + advertising
05 Professional services
06 Your savings scoreboard
07 Let's connect

HOW TO UTILIZE THIS GUIDE

Retrieve your bank and card statements from the past three months. For each category, review the questions and check off every one you would answer "yes" to. Then, select an action and note down the amount you plan to save.

*NOTE:** This guide is intended solely for educational purposes and should not be considered legal, tax, or financial advice. Every situation is unique—please consult your TaxFort preparer regarding your specific circumstances.

EXPENSE CATEGORY 1 OF 5

Software & Subscriptions 01

If you answer *yes...*

- [ ] Are you currently investing in multiple tools that serve the same purpose?
- [ ] Are you spending money on seats or licenses that are unnecessary?
- [ ] Is it possible to downgrade while still retaining all essential features?
- [ ] Are you taking advantage of an annual billing discount that you might be overlooking?
- [ ] Is there a software you haven't opened in the last 90 days but are still paying for?

Try *this:*

- [ ] DOWNGRADE TIERS
- [ ] REDUCE USERS
- [ ] SWITCH TO ANNUAL BILLING
- [ ] CANCEL

CURRENT MONTHLY COST		POTENTIAL MONTHLY SAVINGS		POTENTIAL ANNUAL SAVINGS (× 12)
$ _____	–	$ _____	=	$ _____

My move: _____ By: _____

TaxFort Tip: If you prepay in December for a 12-month plan, cash-basis businesses can usually deduct it on their 2026 tax return. Consult us before making significant prepayments.

EXPENSE CATEGORY 2 OF 5

02

Insurance

If you answer *yes...*

- [ ] Are your coverage limits in sync with the current needs of your business?
- [ ] Have there been any changes to your services, vehicles, or locations since you purchased the policy?
- [ ] Has it been over two years since you last compared quotes?
- [ ] Do you have policies that you could combine, such as general liability, commercial auto, property, and workers' compensation?

Try *this:*

☐ COMPARE QUOTES ☐ REVIEW POLICY ☐ UPDATE COVERAGE ☐ BUNDLE

CURRENT MONTHLY COST		POTENTIAL MONTHLY SAVINGS		POTENTIAL ANNUAL SAVINGS (× 12)
$ _____	−	$ _____	=	$ _____

My move: _____ By: _____

TaxFort Tip: Business insurance premiums are deductible, but the personal share of a mixed-use policy (like a car used personally) is not. Upon renewal, request a written breakdown of business and personal shares from your agent.

EXPENSE CATEGORY 3 OF 5

03

Banking + Payments

If you answer *yes...*

- [ ] Are you incurring monthly or annual account fees?
- [ ] Do you have outstanding balances on high-interest credit cards?
- [ ] Are there any accounts or cards that you no longer use but continue to pay for?
- [ ] Is there surplus cash languishing in a non-interest-bearing account?
- [ ] Are you incurring wire, ACH, or rush fees due to last-minute planning?

Try *this:*

- [ ] SHOP ACCOUNTS
- [ ] PRIORITIZE HIGH-INTEREST DEBT
- [ ] ALLOCATE IDLE CASH

CURRENT MONTHLY COST		POTENTIAL MONTHLY SAVINGS		POTENTIAL ANNUAL SAVINGS (× 12)
$ _____	−	$ _____	=	$ _____

My move: _____ By: _____

TaxFort Tip: Deduct interest and fees on business credit cards, but avoid using personal cards for business expenses to prevent bookkeeping issues. Keep all business expenses on a dedicated business account for simplified finances.

EXPENSE CATEGORY 4 OF 5

04

Marketing + Advertising

If you answer *yes...*

- [ ] Are you investing in a platform without tracking the number of leads it generates for you?
- [ ] Are you investing in traffic to a page that fails to convert?
- [ ] Could you use more organic content like posts, reviews, and referrals instead of paid ads?
- [ ] Are you prioritizing costly new-client acquisition instead of nurturing and upselling your existing clients?

Try *this:*

- [ ] ANALYZE ROI
- [ ] AUDIT FUNNELS
- [ ] ORGANIC VS. PAID
- [ ] NURTURE VS. ACQUIRE

CURRENT MONTHLY COST		POTENTIAL MONTHLY SAVINGS		POTENTIAL ANNUAL SAVINGS (× 12)
$ _____	–	$ _____	=	$ _____

My move: _____ By: _____

TaxFort Tip: Advertising is deductible but not free. A $1,000 ad with no clients still costs about $700–$800 after taxes. It's important to track cost per lead instead of just total spending.

EXPENSE CATEGORY 5 OF 5

05

Professional Services

If you answer *yes...*

- [ ] Are you spending money on services, access, or support that you seldom utilize?
- [ ] Are you incurring extra charges for preparation tasks that you could easily handle on your own, such as organizing receipts?
- [ ] Are you constantly hiring someone to resolve the same issue in your business?
- [ ] Are you frequently incurring rush fees due to late arrivals?

Try *this:*

- [ ] ADJUST SCOPE
- [ ] MATCH SERVICE LEVEL TO YOUR NEED
- [ ] PLAN AHEAD

CURRENT MONTHLY COST		POTENTIAL MONTHLY SAVINGS		POTENTIAL ANNUAL SAVINGS (× 12)
$ _____	−	$ _____	=	$ _____

My move: _____ By: _____

Year-end bookkeeping clean-up is costlier than ongoing reconciliation. Submitting documents in April is more expensive than in February. Planning ahead is the most economical investment for professional services.

ADD IT ALL UP

06

Your savings scoreboard

Copy the savings from each page. Even minor reductions can accumulate quickly when you see them consolidated in one location.

CATEGORY	MONTHLY SAVINGS	ANNUAL SAVINGS
01 Software & subscriptions	$ _____	$ _____
02 Insurance	$ _____	$ _____
03 Banking + payments	$ _____	$ _____
04 Marketing + advertising	$ _____	$ _____
05 Professional services	$ _____	$ _____
Total back in your pocket	$ _____	$ _____

WHERE WILL THE SAVINGS GO? PICK ONE.

☐ **Q4 estimated payment**

Due by January 15. Adding to it now is better than facing an unexpected bill in April.

☐ **Retirement contribution**

A SEP IRA or Solo 401(k) converts business expenses into valuable deductions and savings.

☐ **Emergency fund**

Aiming for three months' worth of expenses is your target. Set up an automated transfer and let it run on its own.

Before you cut: one tax reality check

A deductible expense isn't free—yet it isn't the full price either. Eliminate what you don't utilize, retain what generates income, and avoid discarding essential tools merely to reduce December's bill. Unsure about what qualifies? Bring it to your tax planning meeting for clarification.

TAXFORT

Your Home Base for Taxes

Let's Connect!

We help small business owners and self-employed professionals manage their finances, cut expenses, and plan for taxes, ensuring consistent preparation each year. If you identify a financial gap you can't tackle alone, we're here to assist.

- ✓ Tax preparation
- ✓ Tax planning
- ✓ Bookkeeping
- ✓ English y español

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100% virtual in all 50 states
Not in Central Florida? Upload your documents and we'll file from anywhere.

WANT A SECOND SET OF EYES ON YOUR EXPENSES?

1. Please bring this guide along with your completed scoreboard.
2. Your bank and card statements from the last three months.
3. Your year-to-date Profit and Loss statement (or we can create it together with you).

Book your appointment at mytaxfort.com

Or email us at info@mytaxfort.com · Follow @mytaxfort